

MINUTES OF THE MEETING February 3, 2016

SHEILA “Skip” NOWELL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Sheila “Skip” Nowell Leadership Academy was held on

February 3, 2016 at Sheila “Skip” Nowell Leadership Academy, 133 Delaine Street, Providence, RI. Co-chair and presiding officer Nancy Wilson welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Present: Deirdre Denning-Norton, Joseph DiMartino, Susan Gerskoff, Stephanie Gonzalez, Deborah Perry, Toby Simon, Nancy Wilson, Michael Commendatore and Jodi LaFauci.

Absent: Misty Delgado, Gigi DiBello, Michele Cinquegrano, Michael Tartaglia, Clarice LaVerne-Thompson and Patricia Flanagan.

1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

On a motion duly made by Joe DiMartino and seconded by Stephanie Gonzalez
it was

VOTED: That the Sheila Skip Nowell Leadership Academy accept the agenda for the meeting of February 3, 2016.

Vote: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Deirdre Denning-Norton, Joseph

DiMartino, Susan Gerskoff, Stephanie Gonzalez, Deborah Perry and Toby Simon.

NAYS: 0

2. OPEN FORUM

Co-chair Nancy Wilson explained to the audience that the Board of Directors will allow for public comment, limited to two minutes per person and beginning with comments pertaining to approval items on tonight's meeting agenda before accepting comments on other topics.

Members of the Board of Directors were asked to give their full attention to speakers but were reminded that they could not engage speakers in conversation or answer questions.

If concerns or questions were raised from Open Forum topics, the Board could direct staff to follow up.

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Co-chair Nancy Wilson put forth the slate of the following officers to be elected:

Co-Chairs Nancy Wilson & Deb Perry to complete the term vacated by William Walter

Secretary Deirdre Denning- Norton to complete the term vacated by Nancy Wilson

Nancy Wilson asked if there were any other nominations from the floor.

**On a motion duly made by Joe DiMartino and seconded by Toby Simon
it was**

VOTED: That the Sheila Skip Nowell Leadership Academy accept the slate for the Nowell Board of Directors.

Vote: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Deirdre Denning-Norton, Joseph DiMartino, Susan Gerskoff, Stephanie Gonzalez, Deborah Perry and Toby Simon.

NAYS: 0

4. REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Co- chair Nancy Wilson informed the board of directors that Bill Walter has resigned.

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

**On a motion duly made by Dierdre Denning-Norton and seconded by Toby Simon
it was**

VOTED: That the Sheila Skip Nowell Leadership Academy accept the minutes of the November 4, 2015 meeting.

Vote: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Deirdre Denning-Norton, Joseph DiMartino, Susan Gerskoff, Stephanie Gonzalez, Deborah Perry and Toby Simon.

NAYS: 0

6. FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Michael Commendatore presented the report on behalf of Michael Tartaglia. Michael Commendatore reported that we are on target for spending for the year. Nowell has received a General Fund Check from the state. Nowell has also received Medicaid money. The school will begin projecting the proposed state budget cut of \$350 per pupil and how it will affect us. Mike will attend a meeting tomorrow at the League of Charter Schools for more information on the anticipated cuts.

On a motion duly made by Dierdre Denning-Norton and seconded by Toby Simon

it was

VOTED: That the Sheila Skip Nowell Leadership Academy accept the finance committee report.

Vote: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Deirdre Denning-Norton, Joseph DiMartino, Susan Gerskoff, Stephanie Gonzalez, Deborah Perry and Toby Simon.

NAYS: 0

7. STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE UPDATE

Joe DiMartino presented the sub-committee work at the previously held 5:00p.m. meeting. The committees are Development, Climate and Culture, School Improvement and Facilities. The strategic planning worksheets will be compiled for review at the next board meeting.

On a motion duly made by Susan Gershkoff and seconded by Deirdre Denning-Norton

it was

VOTED: That the Sheila Skip Nowell Leadership Academy accept the strategic planning committee report.

Vote: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Deirdre Denning-Norton, Joseph DiMartino, Susan Gerskoff, Stephanie Gonzalez, Deborah Perry and Toby Simon.

NAYS: 0

8. FACILITIES EXPANSION UPDATE

Co-chair Deb Perry explained that multiple sites have been explored in East Providence. The first site was appealing but needed significant work to bring it up to code. The second site had many updates to be done as well. The third site needed bathroom and office space renovations and would require a zone change and updates to the parking lot. The three were determined not to meet our needs although they included childcare nearby.

Charter plans to expand in the current locations were also explored. An option in Providence is that the school could move into the gymnasium space owned by the YWCA, which would significantly increase the square footage. The gymnasium needs a new HVAC system which the YWCA is already planning to install. The building in Central Falls can handle expansion.

To give the Board an idea of how the gymnasium could be utilized, designers reviewed a design of the space that was created for the YWCA's STEAM Engine project and indicated that something similar would work for Nowell.

The Facilities Expansion Committee requested permission to move forward with an expansion plan to include an RFP for design work and general contractors (with Michael Commendatore facilitating a fair bidding process) and \$460,000 in funds for the necessary work to

be done and allocated as follows approximately \$350,000 for general improvements, approximately \$50,000 for courtyard improvements and approximately \$60,000 for bathroom improvements

On a motion duly made by Susan Gershkoff and seconded by Joseph DiMartino

it was

VOTED: That the Sheila Skip Nowell Leadership Academy accept the facilities expansion plan.

Vote: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Deirdre Denning-Norton, Joseph DiMartino, Susan Gerskoff, Stephanie Gonzalez, Deborah Perry and Toby Simon.

NAYS: 0

9. MANAGING DIRECTOR UPDATE

a. Michael Commendatore presented information to expand leases at both Capital and Central Campus locations. YWCA RI Board Members recused themselves from this discussion. Mike requested that the Board consider requesting lease expansions from the YWCA RI and authorize him to sign updated leases as follows: 133 Delaine Street, Providence to include 8,496 square feet and lease to increase \$4,246 per month effective April 1, 2016 or thereabout and 43 Hawes Street, Central Falls to include 5,325 square feet and lease to increase

\$1103.22 per month effective March 1, 2016 or thereabout.

**On a motion duly made by Toby Simon and seconded by Joseph DiMartino
it was**

VOTED: That the Sheila Skip Nowell Leadership Academy request the lease expansions from the YWCA and authorize Michael Commendatore Co to sign the updated leases.

Vote: 3 members voted in the affirmative, 0 members voted in the negative and 4 recusals as follows:

**YEAS: Deirdre Denning-Norton,
Joseph DiMartino and Toby Simon.**

NAYS: 0

**RECUSALS: Deb Perry, Susan Gershoff, Nancy Wilson and
Stephanie Gonzalez.**

b. There was an amendment to section 7 of the tax form 190 to include highest paid employee.

VOTED: to accept the amendment to Section 7 of the tax for 190.

Vote: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Deirdre Denning-Norton, Joseph DiMartino, Susan Gerskoff,

Stephanie Gonzalez, Deborah Perry and Toby Simon.

NAYS: 0

c. Audit status was good this year.

VOTED: to accept the audit.

Vote: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Deirdre Denning-Norton, Joseph DiMartino, Susan Gerskoff, Stephanie Gonzalez, Deborah Perry and Toby Simon.

NAYS: 0

d. Health Care Policy update - Mike reviewed ten quotes in selecting a suitable health care package. In this review he decided to use the plan from last year as it was acceptable and within the budget.

VOTED: to approve the health care policy selection.

Vote: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Deirdre Denning-Norton, Joseph DiMartino, Susan Gerskoff, Stephanie Gonzalez, Deborah Perry and Toby Simon.

NAYS: 0

e. 401(k) - As employees became eligible in September, 2015, Mike contacted Ameriprise and selected Transamerica as it had low rates

and was easy to use. Mike received sign authorization from the prior Board Chair to make this selection. There is a 6% match for only administrative employees.

On a motion duly made by Susan Gershkoff and seconded by Stephanie Gonzalez
it was

VOTED: to approve the 401(k) provider selection.

Vote: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Deirdre Denning-Norton, Joseph DiMartino, Susan Gershkoff, Stephanie Gonzalez, Deborah Perry and Toby Simon.

NAYS: 0

NAYS: 0

10. HEAD OF SCHOOL UPDATE

a. Jodi LaFauci updated the board on the RIDE Interim Site Visit Update conducted on June 10, 2015 and shared with the school on December 8, 2105.

b. Additionally, a committee of League members and RIDE leadership are revising Charter Performance Tools.

c. 2014-16 Student Performance and Attendance Data Overview. This collected data provides a landscape of scheduling, attendance, computer distribution and alumni updates. Jodi requested that

follow up questions be sent to her as the team is preparing a second update at the close of term two.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Presiding Officer and Co-chair Nancy Wilson indicated that an Executive Session had been planned pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws Sec. 42-46-5(a)(2) – session pertaining to technology investigation

Nancy called an emergency session of the Executive Committee and invited Board Members to join.

Motion was made by D Perry and seconded D. Norton to go into executive session.

Motion was made by D Perry and seconded by D. Norton to seal the minutes of the executive session.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Susan Gershkoff with no objections.

Nancy Wilson adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.